

645 of a Municipal Council composed of merchants and notabilities being formed in Mukalla, but it did not seem likely that it would even-tuate.

636 The Sultanate is divided into five *liwas* or provinces. Shihr, the oldest, Mukalla, Du'an, Hajr, and Shibam. Each of these provinces is ruled on behalf of the Sultan by a salaried Governor or *Muqaddam*, who has at least one paid clerk. He has direct control over the Qu'aiti towns in his province, and in important ones which are not autonomous there is a sub-Governor responsible to the Governor of the province. Subject to the general orders of His Highness the *Muqaddam* has power to settle any case in the province, but there is an appeal to the *Wazir* and Governor of Mukalla. From the judgments and decisions of the *Wazir* appeal lies to His Highness.

631 There are a number of autonomous towns throughout the Hadhramaut governed by particular tribes or families, and the Central Government does not interfere in their internal affairs. Relations with the tribes over the country are conducted principally through 632 the Governors on whose towns they economically depend. The 635 Sultan has the two following types of agreements with the various 642 tribes: A. Engagements containing an undertaking to respond to the call of the Sultan in any matter and at any time, and B. Engagements of *bon voisinage* and friendship containing an undertaking to co-operate in matters of mutual interest. These agreements are all written.

The following tribes have A. agreements: Tamimi, Manahil, Ath Tha'yani, Awābitha, Seibani, Beni Hasan, 'Akābira, Muham-madiyin, Sumūh, Al Bab Sura, Hālka, Nūwah, Mahfudh, Makhashin, the Hadhrami Yafa'is, Hāmdī, Beni Dagħār, and Buheish.

The following tribes have B. agreements: Hamumi, Qarzi, Sha'āmila, Bahasan, Ma'āra, Jōhi, 'Awāmir, Ash Shenafir al Kathīr, Mahra, Nahd Rodhān, Sei'ar, Ad Deiyin, Ja'da, Baheith, Namāra Beni Hilāl, 'Awāleq, Hājib Beni Sa'd, Bahanaf, Bā Hanaf Al al 'Ajaz al Mushafir, Al Senad al Murqashi, Ba Habāb, Meseiliyin, 'Asārīna, Al Sūeid and Al Mubarek, Beni 'Utheiman, Bā Babekr and Al Zaghib, tribesmen of Sadf, Al 'Amūdi, Ash Shof, Beduins of Shāūla, Al Beihan al 'Awāmir, Al Khashia al Murqashi, Deiyeb, Qumeish, and Bā Bekr.

661 When there is any doubt as to the loyalty of a particular tribe, 6431 hostages have to be provided who are kept in Mukalla prison, at 642 Du'an, and sometimes at Shihr. Hostages may be changed every month. Presents are given and subsidies paid to some of the tribes, and on the visits of tribal 'Aqils to provincial headquarters they are given presents, and in some cases entertained.

642 The Qu'aiti administration makes no attempt to interfere with 632 tribal usages, but tribal usage does not run in the Qu'aiti towns and within the area round them dominated by white pillars

HURĒḌA, THE CENTRE OF THE EL-'AṬṬĀS CLAN 99

the Ghumdān appear to be of recent date. The well is also found, and plucky Sayyid 'Alī has the daring to go down into it, in spite of the gruesome tales of snakes and other monsters which are said to haunt its depths. The pit appears to be a shaft of karst about 90 feet in depth; in the lower part of it there is a transverse passage into which Sayyid 'Alī penetrates over a few yards, with a loaded revolver in his hand. Then the squeaking of bats fluttering around him becomes too much for him and he returns to the shaft, where Von Wissmann has followed him. No traces of human activity nor of hidden treasures can be detected by the light of their electric torches. Both of them climb up again out of the pit without mishap, but with great effort.

Henceforth Sayyid 'Alī feels drawn to Von Wissmann by the friendship of admiration. Of course he wishes to go with us into the valley of Ḥaḍramaut to the great Sayyid el-Kāf in Terīm and then to accompany us further to Qabr Hūd, there, with his friend "Harmal" (corruption of Hermann, see p. 47), to explore the mysterious Bīr Barhūt. He who dared the descent of Bīr Ghumdān shall also venture the hell's mouth of Barhūt, and the name of Sayyid 'Alī shall be handed down in honour for generations in the annals of Ḥaḍramaut. Drunken with pride and joy Sayyid 'Alī accompanies Von Wissmann through the darkness back to Hurēḍa. He relates his tale, which grows ever finer in the telling, until deep into the night. My companion's fame precedes him into Ḥaḍramaut. Sayyid 'Alī will introduce him with pride: "Harmal, the German airman (look at his knee that has been shot away), the man who fears no height nor depth."

On the morning of May 22nd we have another invitation, this time to take tea with Sayyid Ṭālib, who is introduced as the Sindbad of Ḥaḍramaut. He has travelled pretty well over the Islamic world, where as a sayyid and son of a race of theologians he was everywhere welcome, and he has returned wealthy from his travels. This Sindbad's beautiful house is jestingly called "the little Yildiz". He is old by now, but listens

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with amusement while his younger guests relate how, every year, he marries the prettiest girl to be found in Ḥurēḍa. We perfume ourselves with incense, the host doing so the most thoroughly of us all. He keeps the smoking censer under the wide folds of his garment. The tea with dishes of a confection of ginger is served. Sindbad, with his crafty face framed in a white beard, the extreme points of which are dyed orange with *ḥinnā*², tells about his travels. The youthful audience feasts upon the witty tales of this enjoyer of life — a vanishing figure of the typical sayyid society of Ḥaḍramaut.

We exchange keepsakes with Sayyid Ḥasan el-^cAtṭās in lasting remembrance of our visit to Ḥurēḍa. The lavish, kind welcome given us and the friendly feeling shown us here have smoothed the way for us through Ḥaḍramaut.